

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method of drying a thermoplastic norbornene resin in pellet form comprising:

drying said thermoplastic norbornene resin in pellet form for use as a raw material in the manufacture of a substrate of a magnetic recording medium at a temperature between 80° and 120°C, and under at least one of a vacuum and ordinary pressure; and

wherein said drying removes atmospheric gas components and low-boiling-point organic components contained in said thermoplastic norbornene resin.

Claim 2 (canceled)

Claim ²~~3~~ (currently amended): A method of drying a thermoplastic norbornene resin comprising:

drying said thermoplastic norbornene resin under at least one of a vacuum and ordinary pressure;

wherein said drying removes atmospheric gas components and low-boiling-point organic components contained in said thermoplastic norbornene resin; and

~~The method according to Claim 1,~~ wherein the thermoplastic norbornene resin contains, after said drying, N₂ of 20 ppm or lower, O₂ of 20 ppm or lower, H₂O of 1 ppm or lower, low-boiling-aliphatic organic components of 20 ppb or lower in total, and low-boiling-point aromatic organic components of 20 ppb or lower in total.

Claim 4 (currently amended): A method of drying a thermoplastic norbornene resin comprising:

drying said thermoplastic norbornene resin under at least one of a vacuum and ordinary pressure;

wherein said drying removes atmospheric gas components and low-boiling-point organic components contained in said thermoplastic norbornene resin;

The method of Claim 2, wherein said drying under ordinary pressure is conducted at a temperature between 80° and 120°C;

wherein said drying under vacuum is conducted under a degree of vacuum of 20 Pa or lower at a temperature between 80° and 120°C; and

wherein the thermoplastic norbornene resin contains, after drying, N₂ of 20 ppm or lower, O₂ of 20 ppm or lower, H₂O of 1 ppm or lower, low-boiling-point aliphatic components of 20 ppb or lower in total, and low-boiling-point aromatic organic components of 20 ppb or lower in total.

Claims 5-16 (canceled)

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Claim 17 (currently amended): A method of manufacturing a magnetic recording medium comprising:

drying said thermoplastic norbornene resin under at least one of a vacuum and ordinary pressure to produce a dried thermoplastic norbornene resin; and

wherein said drying removes atmospheric gas components and low-boiling-point organic components contained in said thermoplastic norbornene resin;

~~drying a thermoplastic norbornene resin by the method described in Claim 1 to produce a dried thermoplastic resin;~~

injection-molding said dried thermoplastic norbornene resin to form a plastic substrate;

forming a magnetic layer above said plastic substrate;

forming a protection layer on said magnetic layer; and

forming a lubricant layer on said protection layer.

Claim 18⁷ (currently amended): A method of manufacturing a magnetic recording medium comprising:

drying said thermoplastic norbornene resin under at least one of a vacuum and ordinary pressure to produce a dried thermoplastic norbornene resin; and

wherein said drying removes atmospheric gas components and low-boiling-point organic components contained in said thermoplastic norbornene resin;

the method of Claim 2, wherein said drying under ordinary pressure is conducted at a temperature between 80° and 120°C;

wherein said drying under vacuum is conducted under a degree of vacuum of 20 Pa or lower at a temperature between 80° and 120°C;

injection-molding said dried thermoplastic norbornene resin to form a plastic substrate;

forming a magnetic layer above said plastic substrate;

forming a protection layer on said magnetic layer; and
forming a lubricant layer on said protection layer.

Claim ³19 (original): A method of manufacturing a magnetic recording medium comprising:

²drying a thermoplastic norbornene resin by the method described in Claim 3 to produce a dried thermoplastic resin;

injection-molding said dried thermoplastic norbornene resin to form a plastic substrate;

forming a magnetic layer above said plastic substrate;

forming a protection layer on said magnetic layer; and

forming a lubricant layer on said protection layer.

Claim ⁵20 (original): A method of manufacturing a magnetic recording medium comprising:

drying a thermoplastic norbornene resin by the method described in Claim 4 to produce a dried thermoplastic resin;

injection-molding said dried thermoplastic norbornene resin to form a plastic substrate;

forming a magnetic layer above said plastic substrate;

forming a protection layer on said magnetic layer; and

forming a lubricant layer on said protection layer.

Claim ⁸21 (new): A method of drying thermoplastic norbornene resin in pellet form comprising:

drying said thermoplastic norbornene resin for use as a raw material in the manufacture of the substrate of a magnetic recording medium at a temperature between 80° and 120°C, and under at least one of a vacuum and ordinary pressure;

wherein said drying removes atmospheric gas components and low-boiling-point organic components contained in said thermoplastic norbornene resin; and

obtaining a thermoplastic norbornene resin having a thickness greater than or equal to 1.5 mm.

Claim ⁸22 (new): The method of claim ⁹21, wherein:

said drying under ordinary pressure is conducted at a temperature between 80° and 120°C; and

said drying under vacuum is conducted under a degree of vacuum of 20 Pa or lower at a temperature between 80° and 120°C.